

Governor's Advisory Council on Libraries

Thursday, January 20, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM Videoconference

1. Call to order, introductions, and announcements

- a. The meeting was called to order around 3:01 pm.
- b. Present: Joy Bailey, Katie Clark, Kay Jabusch, Rachel Nash, Karen Petersen, Deborah Rinio, Anna Russell, Arthur Walters, Bill Wilson and Martha Kyrillidou (QualityMetrics), Patience Frederiksen (Ex-Officio), Kate Enge (tech support), Claire Imamura (coordinator/minutes), Malan Paquette (member of the public).

2. Choose meeting moderator

- a. Katie Clark volunteered to be meeting moderator.

3. Agenda review, changes, and additions

- a. Patience requested that Public Comment be moved to the top of the agenda. The remainder of the agenda was approved.

4. Public Comments

- a. Malan Paquette, Anchor Point: Ms. Paquette described her difficulties accessing newspaper microfilm for her advocacy work and personal research. She highlighted problems with the microfilm reader available at the Homer library, which she uses because there is not one available at the Anchor Point library, and the need for longer lending periods for microfilm reels, which are dense and contain massive amounts of information. She concluded with a question about if the Constitution is required to be in all library collections because she has observed that not all libraries have it.
- b. No other public comments

5. Approve minutes

- a. Meeting minutes of the March 24, 2020 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

6. Review of 2017-2022 State Plan

- a. Patience provided a brief overview of the Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) in Alaska and the requirements from the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS) to evaluate and revise the LSTA plan every five years.
- b. Alaska receives \$1.1 million annually in LSTA funds. The upcoming LSTA plan will serve as the grant application for these funds for the next five years. We need to submit the new plan by June 30, 2022.

- c. Concurrently, we also need to evaluate the past five years and review how well we met the goals set out in the current LSTA plan. We are working with QualityMetrics on the evaluation, which is due in March or April.
- d. Over the next few months, the goal for this group is to rewrite the goals, objectives, and activities for the next five years. What trends are coming at libraries? What impact will COVID have? Patience has been hearing about libraries serving as telehealth centers where people can have private virtual visits with their doctors.
- e. State Library staff will write the remainder of the plan, which includes an introduction, structure, mission of the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums, background discussion of the goals, and following info like how we will coordinate with stakeholders, evaluate, modify, and disseminate the state plan. The plan ends with certifications, assurances, and a list of the contributors (the people in this group).
- f. The goals for the past five years have been 1. Lifelong learning, 2. Access to materials in a variety of formats, 3. Libraries' evolving roles as anchor institutions.
- g. The activities should be broad enough to cover a wide range of projects that meet library patron needs. They should encourage applicants to think about the end goals of their projects and help think about projects from a patron and public perspective.

7. Review of 2017-2022 LSTA projects

- a. Claire reviewed the LSTA projects by activity that were funded over the past five years, highlighting some of the major programs that are funded with LSTA.
- b. Kay had a question about who reviews the grant applications. Patience responded that the Library Development team makes up the review committee and allocates the funding. She noted that some other states have LSTA councils, but her impression is that there's a level of trust in Library Development staff here in Alaska.

8. Brainstorm on libraries, new trends, changes

- a. The group discussed trends and changes in libraries.
 - i. Virtual programs, take-and-make craft kits
 - 1. Going virtual has helped some libraries expand their audiences. An example is Spanish language storytimes connecting viewers across communities.
 - ii. Increased wi-fi hours and coverage
 - iii. Mobile hotspots – mobile everything!
 - iv. Job services/staff and space reassignments during COVID
 - v. Many libraries have been closed on and off

- vi. Expanding stuff libraries have been doing to also be virtual
- vii. Convenience is key now, plus limiting contact or moving things to outdoor, like drive-throughs, outdoor holds locker, canopies
- viii. Social workers in libraries, assistance to people recently incarcerated. Maybe a traveling social worker who could go around to different libraries?
- ix. Partnerships with legal councils or Alaska Legal Services
- b. We discussed some of the restrictions on LSTA money, like no construction and no lobbying.
- c. There was some discussion about the needs of school libraries and how to connect with them, especially since the school library coordinator position is vacant.
 - i. Claire and Patience noted that ASL received applications from school libraries for ARPA grants, but primarily from two or three school districts. These are staffed school libraries – how to support school libraries that don't have librarians?
 - ii. Rachel asked if school libraries have similar needs – could a mini-grant program fulfill a need for many school libraries?
 - iii. Deborah said that school libraries have some overlapping needs but also things that are individual. Staffing is the biggest need (although LSTA can't help with this), and training for aides or assistants without library training.
 - iv. Patience brought up the history of LSTA in Alaska. When the allocation was lower, around \$300K, Division leadership said that LSTA money should not fund books and collections because that should be part of the library's operating budget. Now that the LSTA allocation has increased so much, should we consider funding collections?
 - 1. Deborah and Katie felt that collections funding would be well-received by school libraries, many of which have a budget of \$0 for books and materials.
 - 2. Karen agreed that any money for collections is awesome.
 - 3. Anna asked about formats – can collections funds be used for ebooks as well as print?
 - 4. Deborah noted that a matching requirement for collections grants could help school libraries leverage more funding.
 - v. Rachel noted that she had heard of school librarians being turned into teachers because the need for teachers is so dire.
 - vi. Patience reported that Janet Madsen, former school library coordinator, estimated that Alaska had lost 30% of its school librarians in the last ten years.

vii. Martha had some data: There are 54 school districts and 135 FTE school librarians, 80 public libraries with 127 FTE librarians, and 6 academic institutions with 40 librarians.

1. Deborah reminded us that these numbers are self-reported, so actuals might be different.

d. A few members worked on the current LSTA plan and felt that it held up well and was very inclusive, encompassing a wide variety of projects and needs.

e. Bill noted that in Alaska, the allocation works out to \$1.40 per resident, so how can you leverage that money? He offered his perspective working with 25 states on their LSTA evaluations – collection development grants are popular in the states that offer them. Alaska is unique in offering statewide databases and providing a lot of support for staff development. He also talked about a ladder structure for grant projects, which they used to do in Ohio: there would be a professional development in a particular area, then those participants would be eligible for demonstration grants in that area, then after you've proved the demonstration grants, they could become mini-grants that are really easy to apply for because they're replicating something.

i. The group appreciated that idea but felt it would require careful execution.

f. Areas that the group wondered about funding:

i. Salary increases for library staff

ii. Children's programming staff

iii. Digital archives

iv. 3-D printing

v. Web services support – website creation or redesign

vi. Computer programming

vii. Community Facebook pages (widely used by rural libraries)

viii. Support for other community groups

9. Overview of process for new state plan

a. February: Meeting about the information gathering phase

i. A survey is open now. Patience and Martha requested that attendees push the survey out to the group, especially before 1/28 so the results can be included in the evaluation. Later submissions will still be used for planning but will not be included in the evaluation.

- ii. Patience said we could have virtual focus groups with school, public, special librarians.
- b. Mid-February: Meeting for Martha and Bill's 5-year evaluation. Martha estimated it will be ready by the first week of February.
- c. Look at the large goals, split up into subcommittees
- d. Group review
- e. Release the draft for public comment
- f. Bring the comments back to the GAC, edit
- g. Sign off and submit to IMLS

10. Set date for next meeting

- a. Next meeting will be Monday, February 7, 1-2:30 pm

11. Adjournment (Moderator)

- a. Rachel moved to adjourn, Kay seconded. Motion passed.

Posted January 26, 2022